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https://hindi-movies-songs.com/joomla/

rec.music.indian.misc

RMIM Articles:
7. Pakistani Films

Prof Surjit Singh

RMIM Articles 7
Pakistani Films

Compiler

Professor Surjit Singh

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By professor toofaanii publishers, East Lansing, MI USA

DEDICATION

Friends [including from (but not limited to) both the classic RMIM and the new RMIM) who encouraged me to keep up my craziness for films, specially Hindi films of the 30s and 40s

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Immense debt is owed to the pioneers, the regulars, the lurkers, the posters, the warriors, the fanatics, the contributors of articles, photos, videos, and songs, the maintainers, the moderators, the meet holders, the meet attenders, the commemorative preparers, the quizzers, the photographers, the videographers, the airport drivers, the behind-the-sceners, the software writers, and other forgotten RMIMers.

A big thanks to my wife Harmesh, and three children, Jai, Libby, and Raja, and, special huggable thanks to Benjamin, for always being there for me.

Professor Surjit Singh

East Lansing, MI

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PREFACE

In the early days of the Internet, I used to read news and other stuff about India on the Yahoo portal and its directories. One day, one of my Indian students told me about Mailing Lists. So, I started reading some of those, e.g. soc.culture.indian. From there I discovered rec.music.indian.misc, which I learnt how to read on Deja News.

This was early 1995 and I was teaching at the Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX. I read the FAQ, the articles, and lurked for a while. I noticed that apart from the lyrics, the most common questions appeared to be about the movie cast, and the list of songs. So, my early posts were on helping people using the now legendary and pioneering Hindi Film Geet Kosh (HFGK) by Har Mandir Singh "Hamraaz". I also helped with the identification of lesser known characters in the movies, specially some of whom had famous songs picturized on them.

I learned a lot from some very knowledgeable RMIMers, e.g. Vish Krishnan, Rajan Parrikar, guri, Ashok Dhareshwar, Chetan Vinchhi, and the late Satish Kalra, to name a few. I and Harmesh enjoyed participating in the quizzes. From 1995 to now (2017) a good part of my waking hours have been spent on the Web, and a big chunk of that has been devoted to interacting with fellow RMIMers.

A few years ago, Suresh Chandvankar, the Honorary Secretary of the Society of Indian Record Collectors, asked me to contribute an article on RMIM for the Society's magazine, The Record News. I started to write slowly and carefully taking my own time, but soon realized that there was no way to write briefly about RMIM. So I asked him if he could devote a whole issue of the magazine to RMIM! He said that magazine was no longer being published, but why don't I write a book on RMIM. It was an excellent suggestion, because so much original valuable content has been generated by RMIMers that it should be collected before it disappears. So on the Facebook RMIM group, I started to collect pdf files of various posted articles. It is a work in progress and is continuing.

In the meantime, January 1, 2017 was the 25th anniversary of RMIM. I thought about writing a mini version of the book to go with the Silver

Jubilee meet being planned for Bangalore, India. But there was not enough time and I was discouraged. Then, Pavan Jha asked if I was going to attend and Anup Pandey mused that it would be great if I could release the book during the meet. That was enough incentive to get to work. There was no way to include everything, so I had to select. Result is in your hands. The big book is called Omnibus, I decided to call this version the Minibus :)

I decided to keep the book a surprise. I had to have an accomplice from Bangalore to distribute the book at the meet. I chose Chetan Vinchhi, he agreed readily. But when I finished the ms on April 2 and asked my US and Indian printers if they could print and deliver 50 copies to Bangalore by the 7th evening, they said no way. Again Chetan came to the rescue, and he, along with Ashok Dhareshwar, was able to keep the secret and deliver the book on time. Amazing people we have in RMIM!

In preparation for the big Omnibus, I looked at the material. It turns out that we have generated thousands of relevant posts, hundreds of articles, thousand of song lyrics, hundreds of quizzes like Rim Jhim Geeton Ki, Chitrahar, etc, and dozens of individual series like A Sher A Day, Abhi To Main Jawan Hoon, Fill in the Blanks, to name a few. All this would have come to thousands of pages. What I plan to do is a series of books on different topics, about 200-300 pages each. I will make the pdfs available for free to download and also have the paperbacks to buy on Amazon and Pothi.

I am starting with the Articles, there will be 3-4 books on Articles, this one is on Pakistani films.

RMIM Archive Article "290".

The Golden Era Of Pakistani Films

Author: Saeed Malik

Source: The Nation Midweek (Pakistan)

Contact: Khawaja Naveed Aslam (knaslam@paknet1.ptc.pk)

The chequered history of Pakistan film industry is interspersed with many vicissitudes. Starting almost from a scratch soon after the political division of the Sub-continent, it gradually progressed to achieve self-reliance and prosperity, and a time came when it could proudly and successfully compete with quality films made across the border in India, matching them in all departments of cinematography.

The golden era of Pakistan cinema was the period which spanned the decades of the 60s and 70s, although a number of good movies had already been produced in Lahore studios during the second half of the 50s. A large number of dedicated workers and movie-makers, who had made names during their stay in Mumbai, like producer-directors Nazir, Shaukat Hussain Rizvi and W Z Ahmad (and their actress-wives Swaran Lata, Nur Jehan and Neena); directors Nazir Ajmeri, Luqman, S Fazli and Masud Parvez; and

play-actors of the calibre of Shah Nawaz, Shakir, Alauddin, Charlie, Ghauri, Himaliyawala, Sadiq Ali, Shameem, Najma and Ragni contributed to the evolution of Pakistan film industry during the formative years of the new state.

The factors which contributed to the decline of Pakistan film industry were: the loss of East Pakistan territory; the inception of television; and the infiltration of non-artistic financiers, who had no or little background, either in the arts, or business. Consequently, senior film-makers (directors and composers including) went into voluntary exile and the industry was taken over by those rich people who invested money for purposes other than artistic ends.

State's lack of commitment to the objective of film development and the unfathomable apathy to the potential of this medium as a means of mass enlightenment, also contributed to the gradual qualitative decline in film-making. Lack of facilities to train young people in the art and craft of cinema was yet another factor which adversely affected the quality of productions at Lahore studios.

Since the dawn of independence, films in thousands have been produced in Pakistan. Although a majority of these movies failed at the box office (for reasons stated above), there were quite a few which not only did good business, but were also applauded for their thematic contents and thrusts, production values, direction, acting and melodic compositions.

Until about ten years after the advent of television in the country in November 1964, films produced in Pakistan held almost complete sway over the world of entertainment. Some astonishingly high-quality and popular films made during that period won kudos for the artistes who helped in their production, and laurels for the country at various international fora. By 1975, the role of films as a dominant form of entertainment had been challenged by television, which laid greater emphasis on tele-dramas that truthfully and vividly reflected both the ugly and pleasant realities of life, PTV plays often had a judicious sprinklings of strong social comments and touches of moral proselytisation.

Histrionic talent for Pakistani movies came from varying sources, mostly from the 'traditional' source (in the case of female artistes). Others who joined the medium had films as their family

trade; some filtered into films through writing for them; and a few were picked up from nowhere, in particular. But they all had one thing in common - they were fresh, spirited and talented.

We need to go back a little in history to have a peep into local film scene and ascertain the valuable contributions made to the cinematic arts in Pakistan by senior artists which resulted in the establishment of a viable film industry, both from the standpoint of artistic inputs, as well as successful business ventures.

Before August 14, 1947, Lahore had four film studios; two owned by Seth Dilsukh Pancholi (one in Muslim Town along Canal Bank and the other on Upper Mall) and the other two were the property of R L Shori, (one on Multan Road and the other behind Regent Cinema on McLeod Road). Both of them were shrewed business-oriented film-makers, who produced a large number of successful films since the advent of the talkies in the Sub-continent in 1931. The owners of these studios, and a majority of technicians associated with these, were non-Muslims whose mass exodus to India in the wake of partition rendered these studios ineffective. One of these studios was gutted and almost ruined.

After the departure of Seth Pancholi to India in early 1948, his studios remained closed for quite some time. It was only after a lapse of several months that Diwan Sardari Lal, the then General Manager of Pancholi Studios, opened one of these where normal activities were resumed, albeit with skeleton staff. The first movie of Pakistan, which had in fact been completed in the year 1947 (before partition) was Teri Yaad, in which Pran and Asha Posley enacted the leading roles. It was released after Pakistan came into being as an independent country.

Among the artists and movie-makers who opted for Pakistan and who arrived in Lahore soon after the political division of the Sub-continent were: Ismail, Zahur Raja, Afzal Himalyawala, Maya Devi, Shahnawaz, Majeed, Ghauri, Charlie, Alauddin, Masud, Santosh Kumar, Suresh, Sadiq Ali and Najma, Shameem, Swaran Lata, Neena, and Nur Jehan (along with their husbands --actor Nazir, and producer-directors W Z Ahmed and Syed Shaukat Hussain Rizvi). Also included in the first batch of immigrants were playwright Saadat Hassan Manto, directors Masud Parvez, Munshi Dil, Luqman and Nazir Ajmeri; and composers Feroze Nizami, G A Chishti and Rashid Attrey. Music directors Master Ghulam Haider and Khurshid

Anwar came later.

Producer-Director Nazir was perhaps the first to start the business of film-making in right earnest, but his first attempt was aborted by the burning of the negatives of the movie Heer-Ranjha, which was completed in two months. He produced another film named Sachayee, which did not hit the bulls' eyes in terms of popularity. His Punjabi film Phairey, and later Laarey, were great successes which earned him much fame and money. In those days, films could be completed with 30-40 thousands rupees, and Phairey was completed within a record period of 20 days. It was released in Pakistan at a time when R K Shorey's Chaman was being shown in Pakistani cinemas but also grossed larger amounts at the box office.

Up to the middle of the decade of the 50s, a number of films were produced in Lahore which did good business at box office. These included Luqman's Shahida; G A Gul's Mundri, Imtiaz Ali Taj's Gulnaar, Daud Chand's Hichkoley, Anwar Kamal's Do Ansoo, Ghulam, Gumnam and Qatil, Sibtain Fazli's Dopatta and Shaukat Rizvi's Chan Way. During this period, Shaukat Rizvi had restored Shori Studios to normal working conditions after more than one year's

hectic efforts. However, the real boost to Pakistan film industry came after banning by the government of the import of Indian movies as a consequence of a successful agitation launched by Pakistani film artists, directors, producers and all those (with only a few exceptions of distributors) associated with film production in 1954, which is now known as the Jaal agitation. This provided an incentive to local film industry resulting into its prosperity thereafter.

Cinema, which is invented by science, and is a powerful artistic medium, a meaningful educational force and important source of entertainment (despite the advent of television), has in Pakistan suffered a qualitative decline since mid-70s. The reason for this decline has already been enumerated earlier in this write-up.

The socially-influencing and artistic potentialities of cinema cannot be denied. Senior denizens still remember how in their youth, many among them, used to spend weekly (and other) holidays watching movies in cinema houses. Little did they fathom the quantum of influence the movies were to have on their personalities, behaviour and life-styles, even clothes and hair-styles. The exciting film medium unfolded for them new vistas of

fantasy, glamour, romance and a source of vicarious pleasure.

Films made by Muslim producers-directors of the pre-partition era created new record of popularity because of their artistic and entertainment qualities. A majority of films made in the bygone years were intelligent pieces of art: low-pitched, gentle and were not encumbered with cheap tricks to entice the film-goers. In comparison, the movies now in circulation have now gotten sillier, shriller and more gimmicked-up with no end of the trend in sight. The recent fad of producing films in foreign countries proves the point.

The emergence of this new wave the world over has failed to temper the excessive proclivity of our film-makers to use violence, terror and brutality, and to take libidinous allowances which has resulted not only in corrupting the tastes of film buffs, but also has created a backlash of socially-harmful fallouts. When one thinks nostalgically of old movies, a rich tapestry of swirling images from many masterpieces of yore float into one's memory lanes, recreating very satisfying feelings.

Before partition, Lahore was one of the three centres of northern

Indian film circuit. The concept of formula film had not yet caught the fancies of the producers, although they were not oblivious of the commercial dimensions of film industry. Films made in those days were, by and large, aesthetically-pleasing and also provided ample entertainment to cinema-goers. Cinema also had psychological advantage over other media of entertainment as anything new is inherently strong enough to become more popular than the old varieties.

The numbers of artistes during the golden era of Pakistan film industry were large but were absorbed, though a bit reluctantly. The ludicrous star system - three pairs carrying the load of about 300 films launched and 150 completed during 1976, for example - created a situation wherein the very survival of a large number of producers was threatened. Subsequent crisis forced many to say goodbye to the industry.

It was during this period that only a handful of stars of the silver screen succeeded in monopolising the productions and dictating their terms to the producers. With Muhammad Ali reaching an age where to show him chasing heroines was to test the patience of even chronic cinema buffs severely; Waheed

Murad's popularity plummeting fast; and Shahid remaining as unpredictable as ever, the only real hero types left were Nadeem in Urdu, and Yousaf Khan in Punjabi films. Among the heroines, Zeba, Rani and Nisho were still there, but by far the strongest was Shabnam, usually paired with Nadeem. To expect the producers to keep investing countless millions on these older stars, most of whom had lost their magic at the box office, was to expect the impossible.

Earlier, in the heydays of Pakistani cinema, silver screen was dominated by the duos of Santosh Kumar-Sabiha, Musarrat Nazir-Sudhir and Shameem Area-Waheed Murad, who ruled the roost when the going was good in the film industry.

With a constantly shrinking market, the average producer continued losing money in backing old faces, because one out of ten films failed in getting his investment back. The cartelisation imposed by the stars and superstars of Pakistani cinema prevented new talent to join the industry thus causing a stagnation in its qualitative and quantitative growth.

The quality of an art depends on the calibre of the people

creating it, and our society has been less than magnanimous in lending its best people to creative professions, especially to film art. As a consequence, the studios are today flooded with the type of individuals (especially the financiers) a majority of whom do not enjoy good reputation, to say the least. This inadequacy of the film industry provided a handle to the orthodox elements in our society to browbeat all those who were, in one way or the other, associated with cinematic arts.

Content-wise, a large majority of Pakistani films do not represent our social and cultural ethos. Stuffed with highly implausible situations, and interspersed with totally frivolous sequences of fighting among different characters (euphemistically called action), our movies have created a credibility problem, thereby losing their legitimacy. On the other hand, any art, if it is the standard-bearer of truth, and if it talks of the good rather than the evil is perfectly legitimate. In the words of late film-maker/composer Khurshid Anwar, "All great poets and artists - Iqbal, Ghalib, Shakespeare and Beethoven - dealt with, or described universal truth". "That is exactly the reason", he went to say, "they are great artists. Truth, in fact, is what is aimed at by the three great systems or methods of coming to terms

with the reality by synthesising the confusing contradictions of existence and the universe: namely, arts, religion and science".

Unless Pakistani films are brought closer to life by mirroring its harsh vicissitudes, they will never qualify as true art, as a piece of art that deals with simple truth is immortal, because truth is eternal. In a majority of films produced in Pakistan these days, the setting seems false, the story not reflective of true realities of life, and music lousy. Discriminating and enlightened cinema-goers have, on umpteen past occasions, protested against deliberate distortion of life in our films, especially those which are made in Punjabi language. An example: An overly-dressed and heavily made-up village girl starts singing in a film sequence and the cinema hall is filled with all sorts of sounds produced by electric organs, guitars and jazz drums to which she makes a few amorous body movements. Does this scene truly reflect the prevailing conditions in contemporary Punjabi hinterland?

Undoubtedly, an element of fantasy is inherent in the very nature of cinema which should not be suppressed and realism should not be taken to mean literalism. History of cinema is replete with

instances showing both fantasy and realism working hand in glove with each other. Films made with genuine and logical motivations (in the human sense) are realistic, if the motivations, actions and reactions of the characters are sensible, and the situations plausible. Unfortunately, most of our films lack these qualities and that is why, Pakistan film industry has been brought to such an impasse.

Under the influence of Western pop music, not-too-allusive sex and violence have become the central themes of the movies. Our film-makers readily emulate alien examples, no matter how harmful these may be for our society, and forget the fact that not only these are totally irrelevant to our socio-political cultural and economic milieu, but are a passing fad having no permanent values.

Cinema is a medium of expression and communication. Besides providing entertainment, a film-maker must have something to convey to his audience. Is he discharging his duty? Is he adequately educated and properly trained to communicate an idea, or a concept, in an easily-discernible artistic manner? The answer to these questions, in a majority of cases, is in the

negative.

Despite many shortcomings, accruing from the incompetence of a number of film-makers, Pakistani movies, especially those made during its golden era (from 1955 to 1975), created several landmarks. Some important 'first' of Pakistan cinema are listed hereunder:

Do Ansoo in Urdu was the first Pakistani film which celebrated its silver jubilee in 1950.

Umer Marvi was the first Gujrati film which was produced in a Karachi studio, and released on September 1, 1970.

The first Balochi film, Hamalo Mah Gunj, was made in 1976, but could not be released due to strong protest by the people of Balochistan.

The first English film produced in Pakistan (Karachi) was Beyond the Last Mountain.

Q Zaman was the first film-maker who experimented with taking

colour shots of a film song recorded for Gul Bakauli, released in 1970. Jago Hooa Swera was the first film produced and directed by A J Kardar in 1953 which won numerous kudos at several international fora.

The first female director of a film produced in Pakistan was Nur Jehan who directed Punjabi Chan Way in 1951. Many insiders contested this claim, but her name appeared on the credits of that film as its director). She also enacted the role of the heroine in the same movie. Feroze Nizami's compositions for the film won uproarious acclaim throughout the length and breath of Pakistan as well as in Indian Punjab.

Baghi (Urdu) was the first Pakistani film produced in 1956, which was released in the People's Republic of China.

Sassi (Urdu) was the first Pakistani film which successfully competed with Indian movies. Earlier, Hichkoley and Phairey had also offered stiff competition to Indian movies exhibited in Pakistan.

Arman (Urdu) celebrated its platinum jubilee.

Dosti (Urdu) celebrated its diamond jubilee with a run of 50 weeks.

The first film song which became a super-hit in Pakistan was Mein Pyar Ka Diya Jalata Hoon, sung by Ali Bakhsh Zahoor. Master Inayat Hussain provided melodic raiments to that song for the film Hichkoley, which was written by Saifuddin Saif.

All songs of film Baiqarar (Urdu) sung by Munawwar Sultana and Ali Bakhsh Zahur, composed by Master Ghulam Haider after his arrival from Bombay, won wide popularity.

Composer G A Chishti wrote and composed six songs for Nazir's Punjabi film Phairey (1950) in one day and recorded them at one go the same day. This record has not yet been broken by any other composer in Pakistan.

RMIM Archive Article "293".

Music that went straight to the hearts - Hari Prasad Chaurasia

Author: Saeed Malik

Source: The Nation Midweek (Pakistan)

Contact: Khawaja Naveed Aslam (knaslam@paknet1.ptc.pk)

Good music, soulfully rendered by an accomplished melodist, as has appropriately been observed, casts its spell on cultivated listeners, astute connoisseurs and lay music buffs, not excluding the profane and puritan members of a society, mesmerising them to various degrees, with its sonic depth and effervescent appeal. If a proof was needed, the September 4th presentation by flutist Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia provided it. Music, it is also claimed, transcends political, geographical, religious, ethnic and all man-made barriers, as melodies produced and enlivened by the intensity, warmth and feeling of the musicians create an enduring impact on the listeners. So did the music of the visiting Indian musician, whose haunting melodies, brimming with emotional outpourings, created an aura of ethereal ambience, which kept the audience spellbound for about three hours.

Fifty-nine years old flutist Hari Prasad Chaurasia, is one of India's most gifted, seasoned and internationally-renowned classicists who, like late Pakistani maestro, Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, has contributed, albeit to a lesser extent, to the globalisation of Sub-continental music. He was recently in Lahore, as he put it, "to make pilgrimage to a city which is known as the fountainhead of melodic wisdom".

Pandit Chaurasia came to our city in a vini, vidi, vici manner on an invitation extended to him by the Sanjan Nagar Institute of Philosophy and Arts, Lahore, and gave a concert of his serene, mesmerising and spine-tingling music, arranged in the spacious hall of a local five-star hotel (courtesy Indian Council for Cultural Relations) and predictably drew a large number of astute connoisseurs, professional gharana musicians and votaries of classical music, not to forget the mentioning of the usual motley crowd of socialites who wish to be seen at such functions. It was the first-ever performance of the Indian flute maestro in Lahore, the city of music lovers.

Among frontline Pakistani gharana melodists who attended the concert in a fraternal gesture of goodwill for the visiting

Indian maestro were vocalists Ustad Ghulam Hassan Shaggan and his son Qadir (Gowaliar); Ustad Sharafat Ali Khan, representing his ailing father Ustad Salamat Ali Khan, and the duo of Imtiaz Ali Khan-Riaz Ali Khan (Shaam Chaurasi); Hamid Ali Khan (Patiala); Mirza Nasiruddin (Delhi) and Ustad Mohammad Hafeez Khan (Talwandi); and composers Wazir Afzal and Altaf Hussain Tafo, (who is also Pakistan's Number One Tabla-player), in addition to scores of practitioners of the melodic arts currently working for film, radio and television orchestras. It was one of the rare melodic moots held in the city which attracted the attention of so many top Pakistani professional musicians. The articulated presentation of ragas by Pandit Chaurasia came up to the expectations of Pakistani melodists and musically vivacious people of Lahore, who appreciated every minute of the hauntingly sweet, emotionally-charging, intellectually-stirring masterly expositions of ragas Hemawati (an uncommon raga) and Chander Kaus.

This scribe was sitting at the far end of the hall and could not properly hear and understand the introductory remarks made by Pandit Chaurasia due to poor amplifying arrangement. It is his educated guess that what was uttered by Chaurasia sounded like

Hemawati, a misharmail (mixed) raga made up of at least two classical formulations. What the visiting Indian artist rendered on his flute sounded like a composition in which the shudh (natural) nikhad (seventh note) had been changed to its komal (flattened) variation. Other characteristics of the raga sounded like those of madhvanti. If, a komal gandhar (third note) is added to raga Sarswati, it will sound like the one played by the learned Pandit Chaurasia.

During the course of presentation, a lady sitting next to my seat seemed to have gone into a trance. When asked whether she understood the esoteric music of Pandit Chaurasia, she replied in the negative, adding, "I don't know as to exactly what he was doing (on his flute), but I was completely overwhelmed by the sound waves which floated through the air in the hall and touched my ear-drums. Academically, I am not in a position to explain the why and how of this phenomenon, but his music created a hypnotic spell on me. It went straight to my heart as, I am sure, it must have reached the deep recesses of the hearts of other listeners". Such was the magic of Pandit Chaurasia's music.

Strange are the vicissitudes of life! The wrestler father of Hari

Prasad wanted his son also to learn the art of self-defence. However, little did he know that this son of his (out of the three) would opt for a career which was not even remotely connected with the martial arts, which were almost anti-thetical to his son's latent yearnings for finer things in life.

The Allahabad born, bred and raised Hari Prasad secretly practised the art of flute-playing in a self-teaching process by re-creating popular film songs of those days. But whenever he chanced to listen to the sophisticated music of the ustaads of that period, he would make attempts to reproduce their melodies through his flute which indeed was an uphill task, often leaving him in a state of dejection and utter frustration. However, his failure in re-creating the music of the great masters did not dampen his enthusiasm. In fact, it strengthened his resolve as, without the knowledge and permission of his father, he accepted a lowly job of a musician at All-India Radio, Cattuck, Orissa, which did not fetch him enough money to easily keep his body and soul together.

When, against his wishes, young Chaurasia was transferred to Bombay (where he played flute in the orchestras of such renowned

composers as Madan Mohan, Jaidev and Roshan), things appeared a little brighter for him. His association with film music, and the influences of sensitive composers changed the course of his profession. He played their melodies feelingly and learnt much from those experiences which are now reflected in the emotion-charged, meditative alap of the ragas which he plays on his flute. The improvisations and bole-making in his alaps are reflective of the cries of a tarnished soul, the pangs of separation suffered by the lovers, and their longings for a reunion, which are the by-products of an intelligent emotive use of music in films. Here I am reminded of two sitar-players who have had similar experiences and background of working with film orchestras under the batons of highly creative composers like Master Ghulam Haider, Naushad Ali and others. They are the late Rubabia Ustad Fateh Ali Khan and the living Ustad Raees Khan.

Chaurasia's contacts with Bombay-based composers (now his home town) seem to have contributed significantly in the chiselling of his melodic personality. But the one person who radically altered Hari Prasad's life was Mrs Annapurna Shankar, the estranged wife of Pandit Ravi Shankar (and the sister of sarod-maestro Ustad Ali Akbar Khan) who, after persistent pleading, cajoling and

beseeching by Hari Prasad, agreed to accept him as her student of classical music. He spent several years under her tutelage and practised daily for 18 hours under the watchful eyes of his sitar-playing, highly disciplinarian Gurumata (lady teacher). It was only after he had practised for several years, and acquired enough knowledge and performing skill that she allowed him to appear in public concerts of classical music.

Now, Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia is one of the best, if not the best, flute players of India, whose recitals command as much respect and attention as did the presentations of Pannah Lal Ghosh, the late flute wizard from Bengal. The warmth, tenderness and incantatory nuances of his music create such a lasting impact on his audiences that they don't get tired of listening to his expositions of ragas.

A true follower of the gaiyki-ang baaj (singing style) of sarod maestro Alauddin Khan (which Chaurasia learnt through the daughter of the late master), his visit to Lahore offered local music buffs a chance to listen to someone who, although not young in age, possesses the expertise and confidence in playing flute which have the exuberance, freshness and verve of a young artist.

At the age of 59, Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia demonstrates a penchant for bold innovations and shuns total reliances on traditions and rigidity, a weakness which sometimes reduces the impact of the music of even seasoned classicists.

It was evident in abundance from the way he got himself immersed in an ocean of music during the slow, meditative and progressive delineation of raga Hemawati's theme. Gradually but surely, he raced up to a breath-shattering pace during a sitar-like jor and jhala (the second and third parts of the solo elaboration of a raga on a string instrument) phase, creating a flurry of music which did not in anyway jarred the ears of the listeners. During that particular phase of his presentation, his flute sounded like a sarod, especially in its breezy flourishes, producing the most intricate graces and glissandos.

While playing the gut, he used a nine-matra (beats) taal (time measure) which does not commonly accompany main compositions (asthai-antras) of the ragas. And he acquitted himself admirably by improvising and composing melodic phrases within the trappings of this difficult taal. Not an easy task, indeed. It pointed to his versatility in impromptu improvisation as also his skill in

remaining within the confines of the uncommon time measure. Again I failed to catch the name of the taal which Chaurasia mentioned in his introductory remarks. Perhaps, he called it Chander taal although there are a couple of other 9-matra thekas which are known by the names of Nusrik taal and Chandkraira taal.

For Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia (as it is with other committed musicians) music is like worship; a medium of divine communion, pursued with noble intentions, and with complete faith in its spiritual aspects. Dedicated to the refinement of classical music and also for demonstrating the potential and vitality of Sub-continental music, Chaurasia has now earned worldwide fame and following, through a series of recordings that brim with his melodic erudition. He is one of those musicians who are competent to skillfully communicate to his audiences the graces and subtleties of our classical music along with its strength and validity. His improvisations "free-ranging", laden with meends and soots (glides and slides) are reflective of deep pathos and emotion-packed melodic phrases which create heart-melting effects on the listeners. He is more than capable of producing soul-stirring melodies through his simple bamboo flute which is perhaps the first man-made musical instrument.

From the first note that he produces from his flute for alap, to the end of his concert, he holds his audiences emotionally linked with him. Of his many admirable qualities of head and heart - his sense of creating enticing musical designs, the inexorable logic of his melodic wisdom; the ability to employ even the subtlest shade of a note; his free and faultless use of sweeping taans (flourishes); and the masterly ability to melismatically weave numerous melodic patterns, and the almost mind-boggling, sophisticated rhythmic designs - the most significant, perhaps, is his highly refined lyricism. He has the knack and natural gift of rendering sustained melodies which flow endlessly and incessantly from his flute with a high degree of expressiveness.

Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasi's versatility is reflected in his penchant for inventing original compositions for film songs (he is reported to have scored music for several films, including Silsila, Chandni and Lamhe) and his proclivity for experimentation with new forms at international melodic moots. He possesses an extraordinarily keen and subtle perception of sur (note), a smattering of which was evidenced from the knowing look on his face (during the first item of his concert) when one of

the taanpuras was not correctly producing the pancham note (fifth). It was only after he had fine-tuned the instrument that he resumed his presentation.

Technically, his alap of raga Hemawati was as innovative as it was brilliant. Later, he demonstrated the richness and variety of the classical composition in a manner that was incredibly artful, authoritative and truly representative of the melody-type system of Sub-continental music as against the harmony-type in vogue in Western countries. Even for the musically fastidious Lahore audiences, his exposition of an uncommon raga created a profound effect. They listened to his music in an environment of respectful informality, imbued with a feeling of serene exaltation. However, his selection of raga Hemawati for this concert raised many eyebrows. It is generally believed that a raga which contains komal gandhar (third), tivar (sharp) madham (fourth) and komal nikhad (seventh) creates dissonance. But the classical composition which Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia played on his flute had this "forbidden' combination of notes (or scale), and yet he manipulated these notes with such dexterity and improvisational excellence that it did not create unpleasant sounds. Thakur Nawab Ali, in his book Maaraful Naghmaat, it may

be recalled, his claimed that a raga using these three notes would produce jarring effects on the listeners and would amount to introducing artificial harmonic balance in an inherently unbalanced scale.

It would be unfair on my part, as also the essay will remain incomplete, if a mention is not made of the excellence, expertise and agility of tabla-player Bannerjee who provided rhythmic accompaniment to maestro Chaurasia. The young percussionist pleasantly surprised the knowledgeable attendees at the concert by the incredible ease and speed with which he played his instrument. Like the flute maestro, Bannerjee, too, was lustily cheered by members of the audience.

In addition to the "coming to the sum" note with pre-set tihaees (three equally-paced phrases), he also made impromptu improvisation on his tabla. In a gesture of patronage, flutist Hari Prasad Chaurasia, during the course of his presentation, provided ample opportunities to Bannerjee to demonstrate his rhythmic agility, performing skill and a fine sense of timing. The young tabla player created rich and complex rhythmic variations on his instrument.

The flute-playing shagird of Pandit Chaurasia provided scalic continuity to the master by producing the sound of the keynote and occasionally creating chord-like contrapuntal lines from his instrument, which enhanced the effectiveness of Chaurasia's recitals.

RMIM Archive Article "294".

Invaluable treasure of music

Author: Saeed Malik

Source: The Nation Midweek (Pakistan)

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It has often been lamented by connoisseurs and votaries of classical music that facilities for the grooming of young aspirants of the esoteric art do not exist anywhere in the country on an institutional basis. The complaint is not unjustified.

Having been consigned to a very low position in our national cultural priorities, the art of singing, especially the classical genres of music, have suffered immeasurably, as a result of official indifference and societal neglect during the past 50 years. Consequently, the special breed of practitioners of the art of classical vocalisation has disappeared from our cultural ethos, making our melodic culture the poorer with the passage of time.

Before the division of the Sub-continent, and for a few years

thereafter, a number of colleges and the University of the Punjab, maintained separate departments of music which offered courses in melodic arts. However, gradually, these departments were forced to cease their activities for want of funds, and the young aspirants were advised to receive training only from professional musicians. The syllabi of Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education, and the University of the Punjab, academically speaking, are still part of the curricula, and examinations are held accordingly. But the examinees have to run from pillar to post to acquire even basic minimum knowledge of music. Hardly any good book on music is available which can help them.

Professional musicians, despite their claims to the contrary, do not willingly train non-professional aspirants (whom they contemptuously call atayees) because of a variety of reasons. True to their close-to-the-chest policy, they try their best to keep melodic knowledge within families of professional musicians. Such a narrow-minded approach towards the spread of melodic knowledge has not only caused irreparable damage to this esoteric art, but has also limited the scope of audiences for appreciation and enjoyment of classical vocalisation. No wonder we have only a

handful of practitioners of art music left in the country in comparison with hundreds of top-class melodists which Pakistan inherited on August 14, 1947. However, a revolution in the domains of electronics and communication has made it possible for those who want to learn classical music through audio and visual cassettes. After having learnt the rudiments of classical art, and developing tone perception, one can now benefit from the recordings which contain melodies of the masters of yore in their original, unadulterated forms. Though more difficult than the system of one-to-one coaching, the traditional way of learning music, these pre-recorded cassettes provide an opportunity to young aspirants to acquire knowledge and performing skill by emulating old maestros' mannerisms, styles of tonal-verbal modulations and their methods for delineation of ragas. Pakistan's ace composer Khawaja Khurshid Anwar, whose 13th death anniversary will be observed on October 30, 1997, has done much in the domain of recorded classical music which is of immense help to those who wish to learn the art of classical singing. An erudite and articulate musician, and a distinguished musicologist, whose incisive analysis of the complexities of our melodic arts were widely appreciated, he was always held in high esteem both by the professional musicians, and lay music buffs

throughout the length and breadth of the country.

His rich educational background and thorough training in classical music fully equipped him to make lasting contributions to the evolution of a distinct Pakistani melodic culture. Known as Khawaja Sahib among his contemporaries, Khurshid Anwar made a comparative study of Sub-continental and several other systems of music, especially the Western. This dimension of his personality, more or less, remained obscured from public view as he himself did not write on or about music.

Besides his contributions to film music and the art of composition, Khurshid Anwar also did substantial work for the preservation of Sub-continental classical music which was tremendously enriched by the followers of Muslim gharanas of musicians. In collaboration with Pakistan National Council of the Arts, EMI (Pakistan) issued in 1976 a set of long playing records which were well received by lovers of art music all over South Asia. Jointly funded by these two organisations, it took Khurshid Anwar two years to complete the recordings. Now that the audio cassettes have totally elbowed the old discs out of commercial circuit, the gramophone recording company was quick in

transferring this valuable treasure of classical music on to 30 cassettes packed into two volumes. Many attempts have been made in the past by musicians and scholars to evolve indigenous devices for writing our classical compositions. The inventors of these abortive devices were motivated by a desire to preserve the asthai-antaras of master musicians exactly in the same tone and tenor in which they were originally invented. But none of them succeeded in evolving a foolproof method.

Why has the highly-developed and scientifically evolved system of Western Staff Notation failed in preserving our classical formulations in their original forms? No completely satisfying explanation has been given so far. Proponents of the system of Western Staff Notation contend that it can be employed for writing our classical compositions. They cite the example of film songs which are being transcribed during their rehearsals and recordings. However, they overlook the fact that there is a world of difference between the plain melodies of film songs, including their interludes, and a classical formulation, the asthai-antara of the ragas. Those who are on the other side of the fence argue that despite its wide use, the system of Western Staff Notation is not yet adequately equipped to fully encompass the

complexities and subtleties of our classical music. Ahang-e-Khusrvi, comprising Raag Mala (ten cassettes) and Gharaanoon ki gaiyki (20 cassettes), have almost totally eliminated the need for using Staff Notation for the preservation of our classical music. When it is possible to record the asthai-antaras in the voices of competent melodists with explanatory remarks by such an erudite musician as the late Khurshid Anwar, why try writing these?

Covering 96 ragas, rendered in the voices of living (until 1976) frontline exponents of Agra, Delhi, Gowaliar, Kirana, Patiala, Sham Chaurasi and the Qawwal Bachey clan of musicians, Ahang-e-Khusrvi is an invaluable treasure of our classical music which, in addition to providing abundant listening pleasure, can serve as a useful guide to those who wish to acquire advance knowledge in our melodic arts.

Vocalists who have lent their voices in the recording of this priceless collection included Ustad Salamat Ali Khan, late Malika-e-Mauseeqi Roshan Ara Begum, Ustad Fateh Ali Khan, Amanat Ali Khan, the late Ustad Chhotey Ghulam Ali Khan, Akhter Ali Khan-Zakir Ali Khan, Ustad Ghulam Hassan Shaggan, Ustads Muhammad

Afzal Khan-Hafeez Khan, the late Ustads Umrao Bundoo Khan, Chaand Khan, Ramzan Khan and several lesser known vocalists. Never before so many shining stars of the musical firmament had joined together to produce a collection of classical music which is but a precious gift for posterity.

RMIM Archive Article "297".

Setting the recording straight - Bade Ghulam Ali Khan

Author: Saeed Malik

Source: The Nation Midweek (Pakistan)

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A city with rich cultural traditions, Lahore has been known for the grooming of a large number of melodists - classical vocalists, instrumentalists popular singer and film composers. Several areas within the Walled City earned fame because of the ebullient creative activities of its residents. These included Bhati Gate, Mochi Gate and Chowk Naugaza. Haveli Mian Khan, inside Mochi Gate, was once inhabited by musicians of Sub-continental fame. Included among them were Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Master Niaz Husain Shami and Bashir Ali Mahi, whose contributions added a new tangent to the melodic culture of Pakistan. In its neighbourhood also lived other melodists of the calibre of Ustad Chhote Ghulam Ali Khan and Khurshid Anwar. This piece is written about a classy classical vocalist, who had to leave his country of his birth as a result of the neglect he suffered both from society and the cultural bureaucracy of

Pakistan.

At times, even an apparently innocuous and casual remark, or an insignificant incident, leads to an event of far-reaching consequences, leaving indelible imprint on the annual of a particular discipline. An unintentional jibe by a singing duo aimed at a musician in the late 20s culminated in the birth of one of the brightest stars on the melodic firmament of the Sub-continent, whose glow spread all over the area. He commanded ungrudging respect from professional musicians and also won the hearts of millions of music buffs, both in Pakistan as well as India and Bangladesh. He was the late Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan.

The late Qazi Zahurul Haq, in his book, Muallamul Naghmaat, has written that the famous qawwals Mubarak Ali Khan-Fateh Ali Khan Jallandhari were once invited to lunch by the late Bade Ghulam Ali Khan. The qawwals, who were known for their melodic erudition and skill in rendering classical asthai-antras (compositions), declined the invitation with the insinuation that they could break bread with a classical singer, but not with a sparda (an accompanying musician with a female singer). Ghulam Ali Khan then, was a sarangi accompanist of a well-known classical singer

of Lahore, Inayat Bai Dheroowali). The cutting edge of the remark of the qawwals hurt young Ghulam Ali so much that there and then he decided to give up sarangi-playing and resolved to practise the art of classical vocalisation so that he could not be derided by anyone any more.

That was how a great artiste was born. And what a classy singer he ultimately turned out to be. Those who have heard him singing (in person or through audio cassettes) will readily agree that he was one of the most accomplished singers of Pakistan until he migrated to India in the early 50s. His mellifluous renditions of classical compositions, and the variety of effects his unique and pliant voice could create, hypnotised his audiences for about 30 years during his life, and continue to cast hypnotic spells on initiated listeners through his recorded music.

Born in Kasur in the year 1902 (some say in 1903) in a family of professional musicians, that melodist of inimitable virtuosity was initiated into instrumental music by his father, Ali Bakhsh. For about 15 years, it is said, young Ghulam Ali Khan played sarangi before he turned to classical singing. During his youth, he had been trained by his uncle Ustad Kaley Khan, (a disciple of

the legendary Mian Taan Ras Khan) who along with his friend Fateh Ali Khan, founded the famous Patiala gharana of kheyal singers. Ghulam Ali Khan's family shifted from Kasur to Lahore, where they lived in haveli Mian Khan. By 1930, Bade Ghulam Ali Khan had already made his mark on the melodic ethos of the Punjab.

A number of Indian music critics have claimed that Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan was an Indian national at the time of partition and went to Lahore after August 14, 1947, and that he came back to India a few years later. This is factually incorrect. Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan was a Pakistani national at the time of the emergence of Pakistan on the political map of the world. He stayed in the country of his birth for several years and migrated to India in the early 50s when he did not find cultural environment in Pakistan congenial and conducive to the flowering of his talent.

Before partition, he used to visit the princely states, like other melodists of that era, to present his music in the darbars of the Nawabs and Rajas, but he was not attached with any princely state such as Patiala, as claimed by Manjri Sinha in his book Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (Lotus Collection, Roli Books).

In Patiala darbar, Ustad Akhter Husain Khan (the father of Amanat Ali Khan-Fateh Ali Khan duo was employed who, along with his singing sons, migrated to Pakistan in September 1947.

Also, it has been claimed by many that a distinct Kasur gharana existed in the Punjab to which Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan belonged. If the gharana is taken to mean a family tree, a family or a khandaan, then the claim is justified. But musical gharanas are recognised only for their stylish contribution to kheyal singing; their different aesthetic approaches to this genre of classical vocalisation; their innovative additions to kheyal singing; their peculiar methods of voice production and taking taans (flights), and their known endeavours to preserve kheyal's serenity, beauty of its form with their creative fancy. The mentors of Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan were the followers of Patiala gharana kheyal traditions. And he himself, at one time, received training from Ustad Ashiq Ali Khan of Patiala. It is, therefore, not correct to assert that a Kasur gharana of musicians as such had existed.

Parenthetically, like several among Bade Ghulam Ali Khan's contemporaries he, too, participated in theatrical activities.

Because of his robust physique and dark skin, he was once given the role of kala deo (black giant) in a play entitled Inder Sabha, which he performed well. After the advent of motion pictures, he also composed music for a movie, which did not fare well at the box office. His younger brothers - Barkat Ali Khan and Mubarak Ali Khan - also created names for themselves, the former for his stylish rendition of thumris, dadras and ghazals, and the later (less) for his classical singing and (more) for acting in successful Punjabi films as a hero.

Those of us from Lahore, who have had the good fortune of listening to Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan's music live, vividly remember his almost daily impromptu concerts at a place known as Jhuggiaan, near the two converging walls of the Lahore Fort inside Roshnai Gate, and his weekly concerts at the tombs of Asif Jah and Nur Jehan, across the Ravi, during the early 1940s. Takia Meeraasian, outside Mochi Gate, Lahore, was yet another place where the late maestro used to practise his art occasionally.

Dark-complexioned, with long thick moustaches, the burly vocalist was quite at ease at singing almost all genres of music - Kheyal, Thumri, Dadra, Kafi and folk, and thus represented a cross-

section of today's many-faceted and fascinating music world. But his forte was kheyal and thumri, which always sounded fresh, and brimmed with his strong individual traits and talents. Unlike his contemporaries, who did not think much of it, he also had a special liking for folk songs. Those who remained close to him remember that he knew many Punjabi, Kashmiri, Sindhi, Purabi, Bengali, and even Nepali, folk songs, which he sang with much gusto. Quite appropriately, he adopted the pen-name of subrang (representing all tonal colours), for his self-composed asthais and antras. He collected rung (colours) from everywhere and used these on his musical canvas. He could also render taans (flights) and sing sargam (solfeggio) with equal ease and confidence.

As fate would have it, such a talented musician as Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan was forced to leave his native land during the early 1950s. Prior to migrating to India, he shifted to Karachi, where he got annoyed with the behaviour and superciliousness of a radio boss. After one year's stay there, he left for Bombay, never to settle in Pakistan thereafter. One of the compelling reasons for Bade Ghulam Ali Khan's departure (for good) for India was the behaviour of a highly self-opinionated radio boss, who used to unnecessarily brag about his melodic wisdom. The fact,

however, was that he only had a smattering of the theory of classical music, but his performing ability was almost zero. Using his high position in Radio Pakistan, he allegedly forced a number of practising musicians to accept him as their Ustad. The late Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, who disclosed his unhappy relationship with the radio official at a social gathering in Lahore where senior government officials, including the then Pakistan High Commissioner in India, intellectuals, journalists and musicians were present. This scribe was also present at that get-together and remembers Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan requesting Khan Saheb to return to his native land. (Before he got Indian citizenship, Bade Ghulam Ali Khan used to visit Lahore once or twice a year). The Khan Sahib replied in Punjabi saying that he too had a stomach to fill. As if to add punch to his statement, he pointed to his tummy and sarcastically added: "Unfortunately, my tummy (pait) is unusually larger than others."

Predictably, he was warmly welcomed in India where, after some time he was honoured with the highest civil awards which are given to individuals for their artistic excellence. (The late Bade Ghulam Ali Khan told several persons, including this scribe, that the then Indian Prime Minister, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru,

had personally persuaded him to settle in India permanently, instead of staying there for nine months in a year and going back to Pakistan to qualify for yet another Indian visa). It is a pity that Pakistan had to lose such a great artist as a result of the alleged high-handedness of just one haughty radio bureaucrat.

In a system of music, the main characteristics of which is improvisation within a given scalic framework, consistency of quality in repeated recitals is an unusual virtue, bordering on genius. The late Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, with his extremely melodious voice and superb skill in improvisation, maintained the quality of his music until he breathed his last. Even after having been inflicted by a stroke, which partially paralysed him in the early 1960s, he succeed in staging a comeback to the world of showbiz. The phenomenon was attributed to the courage, determination and strong will power of the late maestro, which enabled him to sing again after suffering from a crippling disease.

Gifted with abundant natural talent, and with the help of regular practice, the great vocalist could sing any form of music and keep the level of his performance at a sustained level. Paying

tribute to his virtuosity, Manjri Sinha has observed:

"With his music, he illustrated what the Patiala gayaki actually represented. He retained the traditional flavour of the style, but ornamented it with his creative genius, to create a style he christened as the Kasoor gayaki. diligently studying voice culture, he emphasised the need to cultivate a natural and expressive voice, devoid of any false mannerisms. Absolute accuracy of swara was to be maintained painstakingly, even in the fastest of taan passages. A beautiful, flawless aakar came to characterise his style, besides the above features".

V N Despande, a noted Indian musicologist, has praised Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, in the following words:

"His voice was flawless from the point of view of the modern science of voice culture. Compared to Kirana (gayiki), Ghulam Ali Khan allowed greater scope to rhythm-play in which he had a considerable virtuosity. Bole-element was relatively abundant in his music.

In very slow tempo, he could produce very fast revolutions and in

fast tempo, extremely slow revolutions. A voice which easily moved in any tempo was a special gift of the Creater to Ghulam Ali Khan."

The late Khan Sahib was particularly adept at singing difficult and obscure ragas. His marvellous rendition of Kamod, Darbari and several other ragas, which are now available in the form of cassettes, bear eloquent testimony to his musical prowess and agility. Because of his laxity with rigid formulae in classical compositions, he was sometimes accused of being a non-conformist, an accusation that in fact served as a tribute to his virtuosity in presenting swinging versions of a particular composition, when he was at his creative best. Quite naturally, he refused to sing just the grammar of music. His vocalisation was a fine specimen of a fusion of traditions and innovations, which musicologists and practitioners of this fine art regard as the life-blood of progressive refinement in music.

All artists, to varying degrees, are emotional and acutely sensitive to human sufferings, joys, yearnings and hopes. The late Khan Sahib, however, was a class by himself. His sensitivity was sharper and the scope of his emotional universe wider than

that of any other of his contemporaries. Even a minor event of emotional distress left a deep impression on his mind - the dig which the qawwals had at him, and which radically transformed his life, is a clear pointer to this trait of his personality.

Did Bade Ghulam Ali Khan leave Pakistan of his own volition? Did he become enamoured of money, grandeur and a luxurious lifestyle? Or, was he a victim of societal neglect and callous indifference? Or, did he succumb to the over-bearing attitude and behaviour of a senior cultural bureaucrat? Perhaps, a combination of all these factors forced him to leave his homeland, which constantly bugged him in dreams, especially during the evening of his life.

RMIM Archive Article "301".

The origin of Orchestra

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The origin of orchestra

SAEED MALIK

Orchestra was alien to Sub-continental music until it was introduced by the British along with a number of Western musical instruments. But in the new Indian environment, this word acquired a different meaning.

In Western parlance, an orchestra is defined as a large group of players of musical instruments, including typically strings, woodwinds, brasses and percussions, organised especially for performing one of the larger forms of concert music (as a symphony), or for accompanying an extended choral composition with a text, more or less, dramatic in character and usually based on a theme. Orchestras are also used in the West in

performing other dramatic works (as a ballet or opera), or for small group of musicians organised specially to play for dining and dancing, in restaurants. While in ancient Greece, it stood for a circular space used by a chorus in front of the prescenium in a theatre. It acquired somewhat different connotation during the Roman period, when the word orchestra was applied to theatre used for the seats of persons of distinction, in addition to a group of musicians assembled to play a given number. It now also stands for a space in a modern theatre or other public hall that is used by a band of instrumental performers and is commonly located just in front of the stage and at or below the level of the auditorium floor. (Source: Encyclopaedia Britannica).

Whereas an orchestra is an essential and integral part of a polyphonic system of music, it is of least use and importance for our classical music, which is homophonic in nature. In olden days, as it is now, our classical vocalists sang only to the accompaniment of a drone (taanpura), a bow instrument (sarangi) and a pair of tablas. The requirements and nature of our art music are such that it does not need the use of any more musical instruments. Even for a rendition by an instrumentalist, no musical device other than the one he is playing on is used in the

delineation, elaboration and progression of a raga. The absence of an orchestra in a recital of classical music is also due to the fact that our vocalists and instrumentalists do not sing or play written music. They improvise and perform under the influence of intuitive impulses and do not have to depend on the works or scores of someone else (composers) as is the case with Western music.

With the advent of theatre in the Sub-continent, the use of the so-called orchestra was introduced in our melodic ethos. Actually, it meant the playing together by several musicians of a composition invented by another musician to enhance the dramatic impact of a play. Such an orchestra, which usually consisted of a harmonium, an organ, a clarinet, a sarangi and a pair of tablas, played in unison, certain melodic phrases committed to the memory of the musicians and was totally devoid of harmony and improvisation. In other words, the musicians were imprisoned within the confines of a given composition and were not allowed any freedom to express their own musical thoughts, or to make any departure from the original phrases invented by the music director. For all practical purposes, such a rendition by that kind of an orchestra amounted to presenting just one extended

musical phrase, or composition over and over again by a group of instrumentalists.

Police and military bands during the late 19th century helped in the introduction of several Western musical instruments like brasses, woodwind, and percussion, which were until then unknown to the people in the Sub-continent, and also in popularising "Western-type orchestras among the native audiences."

Gramophone recording companies and the radio broadcasting system also used combined instrumental groups for their songs, but the use of an orchestra in a strictly Western sense did not come into vogue until the advent of sound motion pictures, when our music directors slowly but surely began to assimilate the nuances of Western polyphonic system of music.

In their compositions for the films, especially after the mid-50s, the use of harmony and counterpoints, began to seep into songs recorded for the movies, particularly the ones produced at Bombay. This new trend quickly caught up with the younger generations of composers, who were exceedingly influenced by jazz and Western pop music. They started the introduction of elements

of harmony and counterpoints, with the help of a number of Bombay-based Goanese musicians (who were familiar with Western Staff Notation) and by using an ever-increasing number of new electronic musical instruments. This resulted "in the full utilisation of tone, colour and timbre of the instrumental groups and a well-defined balance of forces in the orchestras came a little later."

What is harmony? It concerns the building of chords (tones played together) derived from the scale on which the music is based. It also involves the order in which successions of chords accompany the melody. The initial melody is a monotone tune (one with almost no variation), but the shifting harmony adds colour, tension, and release to the composition.

The discovery that two voices could sing two separate melodies at the same time (and still produce pleasing sounds) occurred sometime during the 9th century in Europe. During the next four centuries, it is claimed, this type of music gradually replaced the older monophonic style. First experiments in the new system of music were confined to organum--one group sang the melody, while the other sang it at a fourth or fifth interval below it.

In Pakistan and India, in addition to many varieties of regional folk melodies, two systems of music are generally practiced. These are the classical, and the popular, which emanate mostly from films and some from radio and television. So far, our classical music has tenaciously resisted the pressures from Western harmonisation and has stood its grounds, but our film music seems to have capitulated. Today, we can hardly find any film song which does not have harmonisation as the basic element of its melodic interludes.

Now, many instrumentalists working for movie orchestras in Pakistan (and India) have learned the system of Western Staff Notation which they employ while writing melodies composed by different musicians. Instead of memorising too many different songs, they write them on paper from which they reproduce the melodies during rehearsals and recordings. Whatever may be said about the use of harmonisation in our film music, it definitely adds to the sonic enchantment of the compositions.

RMIM Archive Article "303".

Mehdi Hassan's stylistic songs

Author: Saeed Malik

Source: The Nation Midweek (Pakistan)

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Mehdi Hassan's stylistic songs

SAEED MALIK

I have known vocalist Mehdi Hassan for about 40 years. It was courtesy Ibrahim Khan, son of Ustad Sardar Khan Delhiwale that I first met this stylist crooner in 1959. Thereafter, I bumped into him on different occasions at the premises of (old) Pakistan Arts Council, where he used to practise his art. I cannot forget one particular occasion when he was totally engrossed and had been completely transported while rendering a kafi of Baba Bhulley Shah.

Later, he visited me on a few occasions in my part-time business office at Shah Alam, riding his powerful motorcycle. We used to confabulate on music and the state of affairs in the local film

industry. Then, he shifted to Karachi and our contacts remained suspended until such time when he returned to Lahore to lend his voice for the recording of film songs. Since then, off and on, our paths crossed in Lahore and abroad at various concert halls.

Being a student of music, I have keenly watched his progressive grooming, especially his distinct style of ghazal-singing, during the past 40 years. Unquestionably, he has contributed so much to the refinement of melodic culture of Pakistan that his name will, forever be enshrined in the annals of music of South Asia.

During the past six decades, the melodic evolution of ghazal in the Sub-continent, especially Pakistan, has been so profound as to put this neo-classical melodic genre in the ambit of an esoteric art form. Like folk music, which caused the spawning of classical genres, the meter-oriented ghazals sung much before 1947, metamorphosed into thumri-ang elaborations, paving the way for melodists to compose and render ghazals in the neo-classical style.

Before partition, Akhteribai Faizabadi, Mukhtar Begum, Afzal Hussain Nageenawale and Barkat Ali Khan, to name a few vocalists,

took the art of ghazal-singing to a new height of popularity. After August 1947, Ustad Barkat Ali Khan (till his death) Farida Khanum, Iqbal Bano, Ijaz Hussain Hazarvi, Ghulam Ali and Mehdi Hassan made wholesome contributions to the further refinement of melodic ghazal, adding a new tangent to this music-literary genre.

The art of ghazal-singing has now assumed the status of the most popular mode of melodic expression in the vocal variety. The role of films, radio, television and stage cannot be minimised which took this genre to every nook and cranny of the Sub-continent, notwithstanding the wide diversity in languages and dialects spoken in its length and breadth. In spite of the fact that this mode of melodic expression is fast racing towards classicism, lay music buffs in millions have turned into its votaries. One composer of film songs, who worked hard in popularising melodic ghazal in the Sub-continent, and who can be singled out for his colossal contributions, is the late Madan Mohan. His ghazal compositions, sung by Lata Mangeshkar and Asha Bhosle, have abundant appeal and radiate irresistible sonic charm.

But one vocalist who should be given much credit for the

furbishing of the melodic content of ghazal is Mehdi Hassan, whose matchless voice and unique performing skill has taken it to such glorious heights as were not touched by any other mode in the past.

Since the invention of gramophone discs, the melodic rendition of ghazal has covered a long distance after its modest beginning in the late 20s, culminating in its current highly-sophisticated form. Consequent upon the rapid progress in its melodic refinement, the modern ghazal-singing style has earned for itself deserved acclaim and recognition, despite intrinsic difficulties and multiple complexities of its varieties and their esoteric formulations which, for many, are not easy to learn.

Taking off from a position of an unimportant adjunct to light classical music (thumri-oriented style of rendition) at the turn of 20th century, it has now reached the apex of glory. The art of ghazal-singing did not enjoy a high status in the hierarchy of classical melodists in old days, because its metrical system was thought to be suited only for poetical expressions, and not much consideration was given to its melodic potential and the consequential incantatory impact on the listeners. Not considered

suitable for musical elaboration, it remained dormant in the melodic culture until the advent of gramophone discs and motion pictures, when development of music took a sudden and sharp turn, mainly through the efforts of sensitive original composers whose creative ingenuity added much to this new form. Essentially a verse of lyrical and melodious charm, Urdu ghazal also conveys intensity of emotions and rhythmic grandeur. That it has enjoyed immense popularity among music buffs of all hues and melodic pursuits points to the fact that it is the end-product of a synthesis of poetry and music; a blend of poetic and musical sensitivity; and a co-mingling of sound and sense.

In ghazal, the poet creatively and sensitively uses the language to convey the subtleties of his thoughts and emotions. Originally, it encompassed stray thoughts of a lover, pangs of separation and longing for a reunion of lover and the beloved, or expression of sensations of pain (melancholia) and pleasure (sparkling joy). Later, poets introduced fresh motifs and symbols and furbished the diction of their ghazals with their individual literary and poetic skill. A few among them sprinkled philosophic ideas into their verses, while others added revolutionary fire into their poetry, or tinged their creative expressions with

highly communicative emotional lyricism.

Employing all these emotional and linguistic resources, an intelligent vocalist adds to ghazal yet another tangent; that is, the melodic interpretation of what the poet originally meant to convey through his poetic expressions. The melodic interpretations vary from one singer to another. The more control a vocalist has over his vocals and melodic expressiveness, the better and enduring is the effectiveness of his renditions.

It requires hard training under the supervision of a competent mentor to acquire the skill to render a ghazal (which lexicographically defined means a conversation with a woman) in its prevalent neo-classical style. Therefore, it is the forte of only a few vocalists, Mehdi Hassan being the most prominent among them. Because of the sophistries of this melodic mode, very few vocalist feel competent to sing ghazals. Female ghazal singers in Pakistan have now become a rare breed. The ageing Iqbal Bano and Farida Khanum are the only female singers in the country who can practise this difficult art.

In ghazal-singing, delivery of words are of utmost importance,

while music frames and embellishes the poetry. Understandably, therefore, impactful ghazal-singing is possible only with correct pronunciation and a clear perception of the meaning of the poetic content which should be backed up by a judicious inter-mingling of melodic inputs and poetic expressions. Vocalist Mehdi Hassan, like Farida Khanum and Iqbal Bano, sings the words of a ghazal clearly and distinctly, without putting unnecessary stress on them, vocalising these as they are commonly spoken. His insight in the meaning of the ghazal and the perception of the poet makes his rendition penetrating, thereby creating an incantatory impact on his countless fans. Mehdi Hassan is one of those competent ghazal singers of Pakistan who can be counted on the fingers of just one hand. He has regaled his listeners for well over 40 years. During this period, he recorded hundreds of songs for the films and an increasing number for radio and television. His major contribution, however, has been to the refurbishing of ghazal-vocalisation in which he has evolved a style which became the envy of his contemporaries on both sides of the Wagah border. A large number of young melodic aspirants in Pakistan and India try to emulate his style of ghazal-singing with pride, and a great deal of respect for Mehdi Hassan.

A pride of our melodic culture, Mehdi Hassan's talent is acknowledged the world over. He is one of those few melodists who have introduced and popularised Pakistani melodic culture in the countries of the Middle East and Europe, not excluding the United States of America where he goes annually to spend sometime with the members of his family who have settled there. With his individualistic style, which represents the inherent strength and potential of our melodic culture, he has put up an impregnable wall of defence against Western cultural onslaught. Votaries of his style of ghazal-singing are not worried much about the future of our music. As long as vocalists of the calibre of Mehdi Hassan are around, the future of Pakistani music is in safe hands, they contend.

Mehdi Hassan is a scion of a well-known family of professional musicians from Rajasthan (India), a majority of whose member migrated into Pakistan soon after the partition of the Sub-continent in 1947. With regular training under the supervision of the elders in the family, and having the ability to benefit from the melodic wisdom of others, he has succeeded in chiselling his melodic personality, which is now recognised all over the music world, especially in Pakistan and India. He has reigned supreme

in the world of showbiz for about four decades. For the past few years, the debilitating impact of an advancing age and an imbecile physique are having telling effects on his vocals.

Discerning listeners can easily detect the areas of his vocalisation which are being adversely affected by old age and poor health. If he is still able to cast an hypnotic spell on his listeners, it is due to his long experience, creative ingenuity and performing skill which compel the listeners to pay rapt and respectful attention to his melodies. A large number of his shagirds (pupils) are currently practising the art of ghazal-singing in Pakistan but none, including his son Asif, has yet acquired enough expertise to claim succession to this great melodist after his retirement.

RMIM Archive Article "309".

Feroze Nizami - in search of excellence

Author: Saeed Malik

Source: The Nation Midweek (Pakistan)

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In search of excellence

SAEED MALIK

Another Lahore musician who, too, made qualitative contributions to the culture of the city as well as Pakistan, was the late Ferozeuddin Ahmad, commonly known as Feroze Nizami. Throughout his long career, he remained in the forefront of the avant-garde movement in compositional music, especially during the early years of independence.

Not many contemporary composers invented melodies which had such a strong imprint of their creator as those of Feroze Nizami. What is particularly interesting is that Nizami's music, stylistically, changed very little over the decades; the same qualities and mannerisms by which his later works are recognised

could be found in many of his earlier compositions.

During a conversation with this scribe when he was at the peak of his career and popularity, Nizami said" I try to make my music speak simply and directly about what is in my heart at the time I am composing. If there is love, sadness, or if I am in a disturbed state of mind, these moods become a part of my compositions".

In the early 1940s, a group of young and educated Muslim composers would regularly meet in Bombay (and sometimes in Lahore) to confabulate on musical problems, and about their constraints as composers. These talented artists included Rafique Ghazanvi, Khawaja Khurshid Anwar and Feroze Nizami. All of them had been nurtured on the classical traditions of Muslim gharana of musicians, which they were promoting with much zeal and verve, either through their classical vocalisation, or via their film compositions.

In the beginning, Feroze Nizami distinguished himself due to his expertise in rendering the Kirana style of classical singing. He inherited the artistic mantle of his distinguished teacher and

mentor, Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan, whom he admired so profoundly.

The elder brother of cricketer Nazar Muhammad, late Feroze Nizami was a man of multi-dimensional personality. He was a classical vocalist of repute, who used to broadcast his music from Lahore, Delhi and Bombay, both before and after the partition of the Sub-continent. He composed music for a large number of movies, first at Bombay, and later, at Lahore and Karachi, and was acclaimed as one of the best music composers of undivided India. He was a musicologist too. He wrote a large number of research articles in English which were published in The Pakistan Times for several years. His Urdu books on music and mysticism were titled as Asrar-e-Mauseeqi (which was prescribed by the University of the Punjab for its course for graduate students in music) and Sarchashma-e-Hayat on sufism, of which he used to talk so much with a great deal of pride. He also dabbled in homoeopathy and practised the art of transcendental meditation. Another vocation of his was his frequent enlightening discourses for young pupils in metaphysics. He was one of the senior students of Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan (others being Waheeda Khanum and Nazar Mohyuddin, who died as actor Amar in Bombay a few years ago) who trained him in the Kirana gharana traditions of kheyal

vocalisation. The late Nizami was also influenced by the singing styles of the prominent exponents of Rampur gharana. The versatile musician from Lahore, Nizami accepted Ustad Sardar Khan Delhiwaley as his teacher about the middle 1950s and received melodic eduction from him till 1963, when that grandson of the legendary Mian Taan Rus Khan died in Lahore.

One of the most influential composers representing the Punjab school since the advent of sound motion pictures in the Sub-continent, Feroze Nizami remained in the forefront of progressive movement in compositional music. He used every means and genre - classical, folk, popular and even melodies derived from Hindu liturgical modes. His greatest achievement and milestone as a powerful and original creative force was reflected in his enchanting compositions in the films Jugnu (Bombay), Dopatta and Chann Way (Lahore).

A graduate from the famous Islamia College, Lahore (1929), this singer-composer-theoretician found it relatively easy to acquire the skill of a classical musician. "My educational background helped me much in understanding and comprehending the finer points, and in discerning the nuances of this finest of the fine

arts", he used to say with a great deal of pride and sense of achievement. He believed that a formally educated person could apply his mind more creatively and study music more methodically than those who were not fortunate enough to receive good education.

Feroze Nizami, Khawaja Khurshid Anwar, Saadat Hassan Manto and Krishen Chander were all contemporaries, and pursued their creative careers at the same time. About the mid-30s, Nizami joined All India Radio as a programme producer. When he began his work in the right earnest in Delhi, he found Khurshid Anwar, another melodist from Lahore; Krishan Chander, a Poonch-born and Lahore-educated short story-writer and Saadat Hassan Manto, the stylist writer from Amritsar, already working for AIR. All four of them resigned at the same time in protest against the out-of-turn promotion of a colleague who was in-charge of the Speech Section. How poor the world of cinema, especially music, would have been, if they had chosen to stay with AIR?

After giving up his radio job, Feroze Nizami shifted to Bombay where he became a freelance music director. Soon his talent attracted attention and won recognition form better-known

producer directors, which resulted in the signing of several contracts. He scored melodies for such memorable movies as Vishwas, Bari Baat, Pia Millan, Umang, Us Paar, Amar Raaj, Nek Parveen and Jugnu. For his uproariously popular compositions for the film Jugnu, he was declared the best composer of the Sub-continent for the year 1947. His songs - Aaj ki raat saaz-e-dil-e-purdard naa cheir, yahan badla wafa ka; tum bhi bhula do, hummein to shaam-e-ghum mein and several others (including the one sung by the late Roshan Area Begum) still create nostalgic spells on senior denizens who fondly cherish the memories good old days when these were broadcast, by radio throughout the length and breadth of the Sub-continent.

Nizami's widespread popularity about the mid-40s was well-deserved. If he was not the greatest Muslim composer after Master Jhandhey Khan, Master Ghulam Haider and Rafique Ghanzanvi, he was certainly one of the greatest by the end of the year 1950. There was no area of composition to which he did not contribute significantly.

After division of the Sub-continent, Feroze Nizami returned to his native city Lahore, where he was immediately signed by

Sibtain Fazli (for Dopatta) and Shaukat Hussain Rizvi (for Channway). He composed songs for these two movies with the same verve and feeling with which he invented melodies for Jugnu. His compositions for the film Dopatta became instant hits, including Chandni raatein and Tum zindagi ko gham ka fasana; for Channway his songs, Mundia Sialkotia and Chan de aa totia, not to forget Changa bana ee saanoon khilona, still sound as fresh as when these were recorded in the late 40s and early 50s.

After that, Feroze Nizami shifted to Karachi where he also scored music for several films (produced in the Eastern Studios). His well-known movies produced in Lahore and Karachi, in addition to Dopatta and Channway, included Intekhab, Kismat, Raaz, Sola Aanay, Manzil, Ghulam and Saughat. A number of songs from these movies also reached the lips of millions during the decade of the 60s. If my memory serves me right, his last film was Saukan (in Punjabi) which was produced and directed by his son Arif Nizami.

Apart from his compositional talent, Feroze Nizami was also acknowledged as a classical singer of much merit. He regularly broadcast music from Radio Pakistan, Lahore, until his death on November 15, 1975. He did not allow his deteriorating health and

old age to interfere in his melodic agenda. About mid-50s, Feroze Nizami was invited by the chairman of (then) Pakistan Arts Council to head its Music Academy, an assignment which afforded him opportunities to impart his melodic knowledge to young aspirants. This scribe remained associated with the late maestro for several years at the Music Academy both as a friend and a member of teaching faculty. He remained the head of the Academy until his death in 1975.

From rhythms, melodies, instrumental colours and salient features of Punjabi folk music and Kirana classical traditions, Feroze Nizami acquired inspirational materials for many of his popular compositions, some of which brought him early recognition and fame. Interest in folk music of his native land (Punjab) came to him early, even before his emergence as a composer. That was manifest in his compositions for All India Radio. It remained a continued and vital influence on him throughout his creative career.

However, other influences, particularly of several different strands of classical music, could also be easily discerned in his music, especially in the films, Channway and Kismet. Close to the

end of his life, Feroze Nizami lost touch with excellence and had to retire from music.

Nizami trained a number of musicians, who also created names for themselves in the world of showbiz. More prominent among them were the inimitable playback singer Muhammad Rafi, composer Ustad Saleem Hussain (commonly known as Saleem Iqbal in the filmworld) and Muhammad Ali, who is currently taking music classes at the Music Academy of the Lahore Arts Council.

RMIM Archive Article "311".

Master Inayat Hussain - lyrics that still haunt

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Lyrics that still haunt

SAEED MALIK

Among resplendent products of Lahore's cultural granary, the name of melodist Master Inayat Hussain stands out quite glaringly.

Hailing from a family of musicians from mauza Mozang, he was one of those few musicians who were inducted into the art of composition as a consequence of circumstances beyond their control.

Beginning his showbiz career as an actor, the late Master Inayat Hussain joined Imperial Film Company, Bombay, where he stayed for a period of four years. Later, he shifted to Calcutta, working

with Producer Kirnani for one year. During his five-year stint with films, he played leading roles in a couple of movies produced at Bombay. Actor Billimoria and actress Salochina, the bright stars of the silver screen in those days, were his contemporaries in the filmworld around 1935.

Those were the days when actors and actresses signed for the movies were required to record songs in their voices which were to be picturised on them. The system of playback singing had not yet been introduced. As Master Inayat showed much promise for a vocalist, he secured entry in the filmworld without much difficulty.

Before stepping in showbiz, Master Inayat Hussain had spent an extended period of apprenticeship with vocalist Bade Ghulam Ali Khan with whom he studied the art of classical singing. Although he belonged to a family of professional musicians, Master Inayat Hussain was not initiated in music by his father. As a vocalist, however, he did not break much ground. The best he could do was to sing in private soirees, and that, too, in the awe-inspiring presence of his ustaad. He also failed in making to the radio.

As an actor, he was not a success either. In due course of time, he ended up solely relying on his musical talent to keep him going. The shift in his career proved a blessing in disguise for him, as well as for film music, to which he later on made wholesome contributions. Films for which he scored music were all produced in Lahore, both before and after independence. There is no denying the fact that the late Master Inayat Hussain was one of the frontline composers of film music in the Sub-continent, whose melodies won kudos from filmgoers as well as classical and popular crooners.

Master Inayat Hussain did not quite remember the date when he joined Columbia Gramophone Company in Lahore as a composer. All he could say was that "it was some 50 years ago", when this scribe talked to him in 1986 before his death, which corresponded to the year 1936, or thereabout. "I joined Columbia when Master Jhandhey Khan had just left that organisation", he said while raking his memory.

Compared to his career as an actor, the late Master Inayat Hussain won early recognition as a composer when his compositions Rubb khair karey, rendered in the voice of Zeenat begum, and Ravi

deeaan challan, sung by Munawwar Sultana, hit the bull's eye. Another song of his, Way pind deya numberadara, also in the voice of late Zeenat Begum, won wide popular acclaim for the composer.

The late Master turned to film music in the early 1940s, when he composed tunes for a Punjabi film Kamli. He chose Ustad Barkat Ali Khan for recording male songs of the film, one of which, O akhian laa kay pachtaya, became a hit song. One of the earliest films produced in Lahore after August 1947 had Master Inayat's melodies. Named Hichkoley, it celebrated silver jubilees in several cities, both in Pakistan and India, primarily because of its lilting tunes.

As a sequel to the sudden spurt in Pakistani film industry in the mid-50s, Master Inayat Hussain was swamped with requests from producers to compose music for their movies. But he did not go after mass production and, instead, accepted only a few films so that he could do justice to each one of those. His policy of selectivity paid rich dividends as it provided him enough time to devote to his creative pursuits.

Thereafter, it turned out to be a complete success story for the

late maestro, and his immortal compositions, Paayel main geet hain chham chham kay and Ulfat kee nayee manzil ko chala, rendered by Iqbal Bano for the films Gumnaam and Qatil, touched the pinnacle of popularity. So great was their impact on public mind and seasoned connoisseurs that even celebrities like Lata Mangeshkar (according to the late composer) wrote him letters to pay their rich tributes to the creative ingenuity of this Pakistani composer.

About that time, the late Ustad Ameer Khan of Indore visited Lahore en route to Afghanistan to participate in Jashn-e-Kabul. The first thing he did after reaching Lahore (as stated by the late composer) was to look for Master Inayat Hussain. During the course of his lengthy conversation (with his contemporaries in Lahore), he told them that the late Master had caused him (Ameer Khan) "great financial losses" by composing a song like Paayel main geet hain chham chham kay. "I consumed all my half-rupee coins for months on end by putting these in the juke box to listen to your song", he told Master Inayat Hussain in a patronising tone and complimenting the maestro for his compositional skill. The composer's own teacher, Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, also got enamoured of his composition Ham bhee to parey

hain rahoan main.

"There could not be a better compensation for my labour than the tributes I received from those great musical personalities", the late Masterji said with a glint of pride in his eyes while talking to this scribe in his home in Mohalla Chaumala, inside Bhati Gate, Lahore. "I don't care much for money as a reward for my creative activities", he said while replying to a question whether he ever felt disappointed over financial remunerations he received for his creative work for films, adding, "words of appreciation from such great masters and top-ranking crooners are my real wealth".

Among his compositions still hummed and whistled by a large number of film-goers and music buffs are Daal pay pappiha boley; Jaan-e-Bahar; Aye dil kissee ki yaad mein; Baanwaria naa row; Banna kay maira nashaiman, and Three Cheers for Bhabhi, hip hip hurray. His tunes have lasting appeal as he had succeeded in sustaining the level of his creative dynamism throughout his long career. The more one hears these (like did the late classicist Ustad Ameer Khan), the more one gets addicted to them.

Very early in his career as a composer, Master Inayat Hussain adopted an eclectic style which ranged from folk melodies and light-classical to effervescently expressive lyricism. He continued to favour semi-classical structures and preferred those compositions which were free of literary association, and were only expressive in musical ideas. In general, he shunned the avant-garde tendencies, often reflected in modern fads such as pop, disco and other types of electrophonic music which avoids innovation for its own sake. However, he was not averse to adopting complex and intricate formal musical schemes and was always prepared to pursue them to their logical conclusions. After listening to a variety of his compositions, one became aware of a lively, original and uncompromising talent at work.

Late composer Khawaja Khurshid Anwar who was quite selective in showering praises on other composers called Master Inayat Hussain an original composer. In a conversation with this scribe, he said that there were very few composers in Pakistan who were truly original in their compositions. In this context he named Master Ghulam Haider and Master Inayat Hussain. Master Inayat Hussain did not care much for the younger generation of Pakistani composers who showed no respect for the old melodic traditions

and senior maestros. "Those who did not have any patience and respect for the rich musical traditions of the past", he said in a somewhat admonishing tone, "cannot achieve a place of distinction in the world of music." He held the opinion that only those who had received formal training from the ustaads could ultimately rise to great heights in film music. In this context, he referred to the rich classical backgrounds of Khurshid Anwar, Feroze Nizami, Master Jhandhey Khan and Rafique Ghazanvi. "Not that they (the classical vocalists) can teach the new generation the art of composition", he said while elaborating his point, "but the young composers can use the classical art in their quest for new forms and modes of expression".

"Mere listening to modern pop or disco music", he concluded, "cannot turn an individual into a truly great film composer as a bay-ustaada (one without a teacher) can never make to the top".

Paradoxically, his own sons became devout proponents of modern music. One of them, a violinist, who could also write music using Western Staff Notation system; and the other, who played Jazz drums, had their own band and were practising the modern fads during the lifetime of the late maestro which was not a matter of

which he could feel proud. His eldest son, Master Tufail, a composer of some merit, invented tunes for a few radio and television programmes before settling permanently in the United States. Master Inayat Hussain had lost count but he thought he scored music for about 50 films both before and after the partition of the Sub-continent. Almost all of those movies did good business at the box office, and those which failed in earning enough revenues for the exhibitors during their first runs, later became popular due to the lilting songs of Master Inayat Hussain.

The second last film of his career, Maula Jat, was screened continuously for two years and created an all-time record at popularity in Pakistan. "Only police could break its spell", the late master said jokingly. If Master Inayat Hussain were alive today, he would have, like other sensitive composers, disassociated himself from Pakistan film industry because of the creatively uncongenial environment that prevails in local studios.

The master composer was one of the illustrious sons of Lahore who, despite a lack of good formal education, contributed so much

to the melodic culture of Pakistan. Like all original tunes, his melodies continue to radiate enough sonic enchantment even after so many years of their invention as to create nostalgic spells on both ordinary music buffs and cultivated connoisseurs, as well as professional melodists.

RMIM Archive Article "313".

Master Ghulam Haider

Author: Saeed Malik

Source: The Nation Midweek (Pakistan)

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The legendary Master Ghulam Haider

by

Saeed Malik

for The Nation, Midweek (Pakistan)

The use of the word genius has in the past been resorted to so indiscreetly and indiscriminately that in many cases its true meaning and import were lost. It has, therefore, become so subverted

that now it lacks the emphasis and definition that is inherent in it. I have used this word sparingly. Only on rare occasions do I use this adjective while writing about musicians. Now, I have an opportunity to do so for someone who, in his lifetime, amply deserved this approbation. And in doing so, I am paying a long overdue tribute to the memory of a celebrated melodist whose matchless skill in composition had been the envy of members of his fraternity during the decade of the 40s.

His was a fascinating chapter in the greatest legend in the Sub-continental film music. He was the late Master Ghulam Haider, who stormed showbiz during the period of 1935 and 1953. On November 13, 1953, he departed for his home in the ethereal world, after greatly enriching film music.

There was much in common between Khurshid Anwar

and Master Ghulam Haider, the two Pakistani composers whose contributions to the refinement of film music won them wide public acclaim and professional recognition.

- Both worked for films at Lahore and Bombay, and their careers ended in Lahore after the partition of India due to their demises.

- Both used, as an ingredient, Punjabi folk music while mellismatically weaving the fabrics of their compositions.

- Both scored music for 28 films each (KA in 42 years and GH in 18 years), movies produced in Lahore and Bombay.

- Both were stylish composers and their songs were almost immediately recognisable on first hearing. In terms of creativeness and

craftsmanship their compositions were rated equally high.

- Both were original composers, who did not borrow from the styles of other inventors of tunes.

- Both were trendsetters whose styles of composition became the envy of their contemporaries.

Few composers of film music in the Sub-continent had such an eventful, almost tumultuous career, and commanded so much respect and so vast a following, as the late Master Ghulam Haider (1906-1953). He overwhelmed the filmworld with his extremely enchanting melodies for Gul Bakauli (a Punjabi film produced in Lahore during the year 1938) which created an all-time record at popularity and success at the box office.

With that success, and those of his subsequent popular movies namely Yamla Jat, Chaudhry, Khandaan, Khazanchi, Poonji and Zamindar, all produced by Dilsukh M Pancholi from Lahore before August 14, 1947, Master Ghulam Haider rose to such unparalleled heights in fame as were not touched by any of his contemporaries, including such masters as Anil Biswas and R C Boral from Calcutta, Master Jhandey Khan at Bombay, and Pundit Amar Nath from Lahore.

Some of his earlier melodies, which senior Pakistanis still fondly remember with a great deal of nostalgia, are

1. Mera salam lay jaa

(a naat by Shamshad Begum)

2. Kankaan deeaan faslaan pakkian nain (Yamla Jat)

(Singer: Shamshad Begum)

3. Bus bus way dholanaan (Chaudhry)

(Singer: Nur Jehan)

4. Mere liye jehan mein,

chain na qarar hai (Khandaan)

(Singer: Nur Jehan)

5. Too kaun see badli mein meray chaand (Khandaan)

(Singer: Nur Jehan)

6. Deevali phir aa gayee Sajni (Khazanchi)

(Singer: Shamshad Begum)

7. Sawan kay nazarain hain (Khazanchi)

(Singer: Shamshad Begum)

8. Duniyaan mein ghariboan ko

aaraam naheen milta (Zamindar)

and many other songs which, for want of space, cannot be enumerated in this piece.

There were three distinct phases in Ghulam Haider's career -

- his association with theatre as a young harmonium player

- his job as a composer with gramophone recording companies

- and his attachment with the film world as a composer.

During the late twenties and early thirties, he worked for theatre and the gramophone recording companies. From 1935 to 1953, he worked for film industry, first in Lahore, then in Bombay and again at Lahore. In 1944, he went to Bombay and created a sensation when he demanded Rs 50,000 (Composer Naushad Ali so wrote in his autobiography) as his remuneration for scoring music for Mehbub Khan's historical movie Humayun. He remained in Bombay for over four years.

The last phase of his career also began at Lahore, where he returned in 1949, and composed melodies for a few films, including his own productions Bayqarar and Mundri, and also for director Imtiaz Ali Taj's Gulnaar, whose songs became uproariously popular. Bachpan ki yaadgaro and Sakhi re naheen

aiye reached the lips of millions in the Sub-continent.

Gifted artists are born and are destined to leave indelible imprints on the annals of music. Very early in his career, Master Ghulam Haider won recognition for being a bright star emerging on the melodic firmament of the Sub-continent. From his first composition for a gramophone recording company to his last in the film Gulnaar (both recorded at Lahore), his scores were characterised by an inimitable style which impressed many a music buff and composer.

A melodist with a rich background of folk and classical music, he had highly individualistic feelings for music. His treatment of melodies had a greater significance than the tunes themselves. The romantic feelings and poetic fire of some of his later works were tinged with modern orchestral

arrangements which he learnt from Western orchestration after the electronic revolution. His compositions were marked by full-blooded melodies, strong rhythmic impulses, both within clearly defined classical structures. Because of his strong personality, he preferred self-expression to excessive innovation.

Film music keeps on growing and refining. From an almost unrecognisable status in the early 1930s, it has, during the past 60 years, developed into one of the most powerful forms of artistic expression and emotional communication. Full of the feeling of unrestrained expansion, it has stretched far across the geographic, ethnic and political boundaries, touching all those individuals who were willing and able to listen to its message, and enriching their lives with a kind of music that is both powerful and tender, happy and melancholic, relaxing and exciting. If music could be described in a language, there would be

no need for it. But in trying to pursue the style of a composer, we may come closer to a common understanding of his art and its meaning. The style is the composer's personality come to fruition; it is what distinguishes him from all others, like a face or a way of speaking. Leading composers always had styles of their own - their songs were more often than not recognisable immediately as theirs, and not of other composers.

Their imitators as well as their competitors could not duplicate all the hallmarks and characteristics which went into the making of their distinct styles. For instance, the most striking feature of Master Ghulam Haider's compositions was their decoration with short melodic phrases and in their rhythmic drives. Moreover, his style was also subtler and far more elusive to trap in words.

Still a Ghulam Haider composition was almost

always recognisable, even to the untrained ears. It had a feel, a sound that was uncommon and distinct. His melodies were enduringly fresh. The melodic rhythm in his compositions were, perhaps, the strongest point -- a direct and simple motif developed through small variations into a long and tantalising phrase.

Few composers could open new vistas of sound as did the late Master Ghulam Haider. He combined tonalities, rhythms, meters and melodic notes in such a manner as had perhaps never before been joined for artistic ends.

He introduced a number of playback singers in the film industry. He discovered Shamshad Begum, whose voice he used in his films produced in Lahore before partition of India, and also for a number of movies produced in Bombay from 1944 to 1948. Credit also goes to the late Masterji for intro-

ducing Lata Mangeshkar in Urdu films. Not only did he record several female songs of film Majboor in her voice, but also used her vocals in other films.

During the early days of film-making, actors-actresses, directors, music directors, musicians and all other persons connected with movie productions, were employed by the studio owners, who invariably were producers of films as well. Master Ghulam was on the payroll of Pancholi Art Studios, Lahore, drawing a salary of Rs 250 per month; indeed a handsome salary about the mid-30s. Financially well taken care of, the late Masterji (as he was known in those days) did not have to worry about his mundane needs, and therefore, could devote his entire attention and energies to the art of composition.

According to poet Nazim Panipati, who has had a

long stint with the late composer, Master Ghulam Haider joined the Jieno Phone Recording Company (then located at Bakhshi Market, Anarkali, Lahore) in 1932 as a composer. His contemporaries were Pandit Amar Nath, G A Chishti and Master Jhandhey Khan. Famous vocalists of that era, Umrao Zia Begum, (whom he married later) and Shamshad Begum, who captivated the Indian silver screen in the decade of the 40s, were a part of the singing talent available to the composers of that period. Soon his compositions recorded in the voices of these crooners became popular as a result of which sales of gramophone discs soared high.

Master Ghulam Haider had a peculiar style and discipline for creating new compositions. Poet Panipati disclosed that the late maestro would take at least four days in composing a tune, which was rehearsed at least for a week in the presence of his able assistants, Bhai Lal Muhammad Sabri (Harmonium), Fateh Ali Khan (Sitar) and Master Manzur

Hussain (Tabla). Often, Master Sohni Khan (clarinettist) joined him at the early stages of a composition.

Once the mukhra (first stanza) of a particular song was composed, the rest of the job became relatively easy for Masterji. A minimum period of two weeks was spent in composing, rehearsing and recording a song.... so strong was his sense of perfection and so great was his respect for the members of his team and orchestra. Octogenarian Habib Khan Ghauri who served in the orchestra of Master Ghulam Haider as a sitar-player in Bombay and Lahore corroborated the statement of poet Nazim Panipati.

Master Ghulam Haider scored music for the first time in the film Sawarg ki Seerhi (starring Umrao Zia Begum and Khadim Hussain) which was followed by his second venture named Majnu 1935, in which

actor Harold Lewis, commonly known as Majnu in the filmworld, enacted the leading role. Both these films were produced in Lahore. His last film was Gulnaar, which was released in the year 1953 and which, too, was produced in Lahore after the division of the Indian Sub-continent.

Born, bred and raised at Hyderabad (Sindh), Master Ghulam Haider in his youth assisted his dental-technologist father for a short period. (His father belonged to the Rubabi clan of musicians, but had adopted dentistry as his profession). Soon the late Masterji felt that he was not cut out for that kind of profession, and after the death of his father, he moved to the Punjab, first to Amritsar (where the Rubabi musicians were concentrated) and later to Lahore.

Music was in the blood of Ghulam Haider as he was born in a family of professional musicians. How-

ever, formally he learnt the art from one Beebay Khan and later acquired it from wherever he could get it. When he was able to play harmonium with a certain degree of perfection, he worked for several theatrical groups, who used to tour the Punjabi hinterland during those days. It was there that he learnt many sub-genres of folk melodies which he later skilfully used in his film compositions.

The late Master Ghulam Haider was an extraordinarily alert, eagerly curious and keen observer of as well as participant in musical experiences. It was this searching, restless involvement in the life around him which explains a fact that occasionally has been overlooked.... the remarkable range of his compositions and vast canvas for his melodic expressions.

The stark, almost unbearably tender "Too kaun see

badli mein meray chaand" (Nur Jehan in "Khaandaan"); the buoyant sophistification of "Nainaan bhar aiyee neer" (Shamshad Begum in "Humayun") and the spare, open sadness of "Ek tera sahara" (Shamshad Begum in "Shamaa") are clear pointers to this trait of the late Masterji.

His last film, Gulnaar, contained several songs which served as a befitting finale to his distinguished career that began in Lahore and ended in the same city, after covering a period of 18 years. He died on November 13, 1953, but not before creating a high enough place for himself in the hierarchy of composers in the Sub-continent, leaving behind a rich treasure of music for the enjoyment of posterity.

Today, forty-four years after the demise of the great composer, his songs still retain their lilting charm and captivating sonic influence. Though

he avoided systems or avant-garde innovations, the late Masterji consistently produced music with a modern sound and a thoroughly contemporary spirit. His compositions were invented with consummate skill and compelling melodic logic.

It is a pity that no individual or organisation (to the best of my knowledge) in Pakistan has catalogued Masterji's compositions which could be marketed commercially in audio cassettes. It would be a great service to the cause of music, and a befitting tribute to the late composer, if an enterprising individual or a commercial gramophone company, ventured to collect the most popular, if not all, songs of the late maestro and made cassettes of these for the education and enlightenment of the present generation of music buffs and musicians.

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Khurshid Anwar - a composer's composer

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Khurshid Anwar - A composers' composer

SAEED MALIK

for

The Nation, Midweek (Oct. 97)

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The cultural capital of Pakistan, Lahore has contributed much to the flowering of cinematic arts, and the

melodic culture of the Sub-continent. It has groomed a large number of film-makers, actors-actresses and melodists, whose invaluable contributions to cinema, before and after the partition of the Sub-continent, will forever remain enshrined in the cultural history of South Asia.

Included in the list of illustrious Lahoris is composer Khurshid Anwar (died: 30th October 1984) who was respectfully known as Khawaja Sahib in the filmworld. Born on March 21, 1912, with the proverbial silver spoon in his mouth, Khurshid Anwar inherited a truly congenial environment which was conducive to the fruition of his natural talent in music.

Since his early childhood, KA was a student of uncommon brilliance who would not stop short of winning the first position in any examination. He topped the Punjab University examination in 1935 for his master's degree in philosophy. He appeared in the written ICS examina-

tion and again topped the list of successful candidates. However, he did not appear in the viva voce and preferred to join All India Radio as a programme producer. How poor the world of music would have been, if he had joined the fraternity of servile bureaucrats to serve His Majesty's government in India!

Though he early showed a strong proclivity for music and was encouraged, both by his father and grandfather, Khurshid Anwar received virtually no formal instruction in this performing art until he reached the age of maturity. Before he met and became a pupil of Ustad Tawakkal Hussain Khan, he was already a musician brimming with abundant natural gift. That was the consequence of his attendance in the twice-a-week soiree held at his father's residence in Lahore where melodists of All-India repute used to participate.

KA joined All India Radio in the late 30s where he produced a number of popular music programmes. Learning

about his potential, the late Mian Abdur Rashid Kardar, once the doyen of Sub-continental filmworld, entrusted him with the responsibility of providing musical scores for his Punjabi movie Kurmai. Khurshid Anwar's tunes won wide popularity. Soon thereafter, as a result of his lilting tunes for J K Nanda's Ishaara and Sohrab Modi's Parakh, Khurshid Anwar emerged as one of the influential composers of undivided India.

Khurshid Anwar was one among the new clan of young and dedicated composers who joined the world of showbiz in the early 40s, when an injection of fresh blood was so direly needed into the ageing veins of film industry. Also included in that group were Rafiq Ghazanvi, Feroze Nizami, Shayam Sundar, Naushad and Rashid Attray. This talented lot was not only highly educated (except Naushad and Attray), with brilliant academic records, but had an immensely demonstrable flair for creative inventiveness which excelled their (professional) contemporaries' abilities.

To the art of composition Khurshid Anwar brought the same trenchant and restless intellect which made him so fine a scholar, poet, producer-director and one of the most erudite interpreters of classical music of the Sub-continent which underwent a complete metamorphosis during the 800-year-old Muslim rule. He believed that music, in the long accepted classical or romantic tradition, had come to the end of its tether, and the contemporary composer must seek out new forms, and new avenues of expression. He also felt that the film was the only fruitful medium of artistic self-expression left to contemporary composers.

His melodic thinking was profound (sometimes abstruse and esoteric) as perhaps only those who listened to his discourses on the history and evolution of music could best appreciate. Though he was disillusioned of and dissatisfied with the prevailing chaos in Pakistani film music, he did not altogether break away with it, but persisted in his indefatigable search for new musi-

cal idioms and expressions.

KA's special gift for endowing tonality, in general, and the trapping of microtonal pitches in his melodies, in particular, were the striking features of his composition. The special characteristics of his tunes -- a touch of meend (a glide from an upper note to a lower one), deep pathos, strong emotional reverberations and romanticism -- are perhaps nowhere more evident than in his films Intezar, Zahr-e-Ishq, Jhoomar, Koel and Heer Ranjha. He seemed to be at the peak of his career then and his songs touched the apex of popularity.

An illustrious son of Lahore, Khurshid Anwar possessed an unusual melodic gift, an orderly mind, a restless and searching temperament, a planned approach and years of hard-earned experience. His creativeness, fertility of ideas, highly cultivated melodic taste, feelings and technique have, in combination, remained unsurpassed by any other Pakistani composer of film music. Only rarely

did another melodist succeed in maintaining the consistently high level of artistry that Khurshid Anwar displayed for so many years, for which he is rightly considered the greatest single contributor to Pakistani film music. Not only did he compose many hit songs, but also showed his natural gift for being an astute arranger. His smooth and effortless melodies were the result of meticulous work. He was a composer who would never stop refurbishing until he was satisfied that a melody had reached its destined perfect shape.

Majid Hussain, an amateur singer with a good voice, spent nearly twenty years with Khurshid Anwar, sometimes assisting him in reproducing the tunes he had composed, and at others, helping in conducting rehearsals with musicians. During a recent conversation with this scribe he talked feelingly about certain traits of the master composer which distinguished him from others.

Said Majid Hussain, "Khawaja Sahib used to rehearse his songs for so many times that even seasoned instrumentalists got scared. For days on end he would ask the musicians to rehearse a song until he was satisfied that the results, as he conceived them, could be achieved."

Asked as to how he composed a new tune, Majid Hussain said: "Khawaja Sahib did not use any instrument while composing a song. At times, I saw a surmandal (harp) in his hands which he fiddled without murmuring any words. His method of composition was intellectual as he would invent a new tune in his mind and, when satisfied, would command a sarangi player and a percussionist to join him in refining the melody. After the sarangi player had committed it to its memory, the singer was called to rehearse the melodic lines of a song under his supervision for several days. Later, a full dress rehearsal with the orchestra was arranged. It was then (during the rehearsals) that Khawaja Sahib arranged the interludes and made fine adjustments in the song. This

process carried on for several days until the composer was satisfied that the recording could be made".

"Even at the conceptual stage of a song", he added, "Khawaja Sahib (sometimes) spent several days. For example, for his popular song, Kali Kali mandlayae Bhanwara, he visited Bagh-e-Jinnah with me for several days to critically examine the sound produced by this insect while hovering over flowers. This effect he included in the interludes of the song. During the rehearsals of this song, the musicians could not easily produce the desired effect. Therefore, he persisted with more rehearsals until the desired results were achieved. No wonder that song became uproariously popular." Another song which took Khurshid Anwar several days in rehearsing, was Saghar royae, lehrain shore machaian (with dominant notes of Shudh Sarang). It was only after he thought he had achieved perfect tonality that he commanded the unit to record it.

So close became Majid Hussain to the composer after an association of several years that the late composer used to call him an encyclopaedia of his music, as with a blink of the eye, he could vocalise a KA composition entirely with its melodic interludes. Unfortunately, Majid Hussain could not learn much from the composer, except memorising his compositions. Coming back to KA, despite his engagements for creating new melodies for the films, which consumed most of his time and energies, KA's love for classical music did not diminish. He was very much concerned about its future which seemed to him to be pretty bleak in Pakistan. He strongly advocated the adoption of appropriate measures to preserve our rich musical heritage which was so assiduously refined by our ancestors during the period the Muslims ruled the Sub-continent. He did not accept the notion that Sub-continental classical music was a Hindu dissipation as the orthodox among us claim. Neither did he believe in the notion that classical music, which is prevalent in northern India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, had any so-called Vedic connections.

Shy, modest and introvert, Khurshid Anwar lived his life quietly and unceremoniously, devoting himself to compositions, and at the fag and of his life, to unfolding mysteries of music on to budding musicians.

Of his many admirable qualities - his fine sense of musical designs, the economy of his means, the inexorable logic of his melodic thinking - the most significant was his highly refined lyricism. He had the gift of composing sustained melodies of expressiveness. This melodic gift became evident even with his earliest efforts at composition.

A composer with solid grooming in classical music, Khurshid Anwar was also influenced by the folk songs of Hariana which he admired and learned during his stay in early childhood in Rohtak, where his grandfather served as Deputy Commissioner. Indeed, some of his earlier compositions a la J K Nanda's box-office hit Ishaara

(1943) and Singhar (1945) smacked of refined varieties of Hariana folk melodies.

The constant refining, the absence of everything unessential and commonplace, the simple presentation of difficult and complicated problems, gave his style a certain exclusiveness. His songs had the irresistible appeal of the sentiment of love and tender pathos. They also radiated matchless beauty of music, true to nature and daring in invention, were and still are as captivating to a child as to sophisticated adults. The more often one listens to his songs, the more meaning he reads into their melodies. Because they have simplicity of artfulness, his tunes grow richer on rehearing.

The immortal composer died on October 30, 1984 (his 13th death anniversary is being observed today) but his immortal melodies will live for ever as the force of his mighty and soulful personality will continue to breathe through his compositions as long as these are

played and replayed. His varied pieces are original in all respects and exhibit a marked individuality of style distinct from those of his illustrious contemporaries in Pakistan and India.

Other composers might have occasionally equalled him in the technical excellence of the art, or in the touching appeal of the sentiment, but none seemed to have succeeded in excelling Khurshid Anwar in the simultaneous presentation of both these qualities in the same measure. The commingling of sense and sound attains its perfection in his compositions which are at once the acme of poetic beauty and melodic wealth.

Few composers of film music possessed the charm and grace of Khurshid Anwar. From his first composition in Kurmai in 1941 to his last in Mirza Jat in 1983 (both in Punjabi language) his melodies glowed with a special liveliness that was characteristically his alone.

A KA composition is almost always recognisable, even to the untrained ears. It has a feel, a sound that is distinct and unique. The composition has an enduring freshness. His melody is usually simple, but inventive, eventful, gracefully clear and full of air. Each phrase grows out of the preceding one. Khurshid Anwar knew the technique of small-form compositions so well that he was able to utilise it unconsciously.

In terms of quantity, Khurshid Anwar trailed behind many of his contemporaries, but qualitatively few could match his talent. During the forty-year long association with the filmworld, he scored music only for 28 movies - nine at Bombay (six before 1947 and three thereafter) and 19 at Lahore (one before independence and 18 after 1952). Of these, 15 were tumultuously successful at the box office, primarily because of their tantalising compositions, four were moderately successful, and of the rest several songs from each became extremely popular.

In addition to inventing new tunes, Khurshid Anwar was very meticulous in creating background music to high-pitch the impact of a certain scene in a movie. He would think hard, even meditate a lot, about the scene for which sound effects were needed. It was after such deep mental exercise that he composed music for back-ground effects which to many appeared impromptu. Several times during his eventful career, KA was acclaimed as the best composer of the year, both on Sub-continental as well as Pakistan level. In 1980, he was awarded the Sitara-e-Imtiaz by the Government of Pakistan for his excellence in the melodic arts.

The All India Music Directors' Association on the occa-sion of the golden jubilee celebrations of Indian film industry in 1982, unanimously awarded a plaque to this genius from Pakistan which read: "Khurshid Anwar-Mortal Man, Immortal Melodies".

So great has been his contributions to the refinement of film music that he achieved the rare distinction of becoming a legend during his life time. So powerful was the impact of his creative endeavours that millions of people thought as if they new Khurshid Anwar personally, although they never had an occasion to meet the maestro. For them, his soul-stirring melodies were enough to establish a spiritual rapport with him.

To some, because of his excellent educational background and rich ancestry, Khurshid Anwar was a dry, terse and an arrogant individual. But to those (like Majid Hussain) who remained close to him, an affable, kind and understanding person lay beneath the thin veneer of his personality. Like all other creative individuals, he, too, had an uncommon tangent to his personality which distinguished him from ordinary people. This scribe met him on many occasions, especially during the evening of his life when he used to reminisce about his eventful career and talked nostalgically

about a number of his contemporaries. He was especially kindly disposed towards singing actor K L Saigol and singing actress Surriya, both of whom (during their days) had captured the imagination of cinegoers in the Sub-continent.

He was also full of praise for composers Anil Biswas, S D Burman and Salil Chaudhry - all of whom were from Sonar Bengla-whose compositions, as he put it, reached the deep recesses of the hearts of millions of music buff. Among Pakistani composers, he would single out Master Ghulam Haider and Master Inayat Hussain for the originality of their compositions, which he called stylistic and distinctive.

Poet Faiz Ahmad Faiz, who remained a life-long friend of Khurshid Anwar, aptly called him the musical spokes-man of Pakistan.

Noor Jehan, the melody queen, who have had long practical association with Khurshid Anwar, epitomised his rare qualities by calling him "the composers' composer, who appear on the melodic firmament only after centuries". Dilating on his compositional technique, another long-time colleague of the maestro, producer-director Masud Parvez, restated the fact that Khawaja Sahib never relied on any musical instrument while composing a song. "Melodies", he said, "simply sprang up from the depth of his heart".

Even after 13 years of KA's death, on hearing his songs one feels his strong melodic personality pulsating through these compositions, prompting the listeners to wonder as if the maestro is still in their midst, acknowledging the ebullient praises his fans used to shower at him. There are certain aspects of man's sojourn on planet Earth which even death cannot totally obscure from our thoughts and feelings. Musical compositions rendered in mellifluous voices of singers are an example worth quoting.

ABOUT THE COMPILER

Professor Surjit Singh, a diehard movie fanatic, period. He is a retired Theoretical Physicist. He has been watching Hindi movies since 1952, has been collecting Hindi songs, movies and magazines since 1969, and has been writing about these things since 1996. He has had a website since 1999,

https://hindi-movies-songs.com/joomla/

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